

10/25/2007 Kansas Congressional Delegation Supports New Brigade Location at Ft. Riley

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WASHINGTON, DC - The entire Kansas Congressional delegation recently sent the following letter in support of the Army's new "Grow the Force" plan to place new brigades across the country:

"We strongly support the selection of Fort Riley to host one of the Infantry Brigade Combat Teams (IBCTs) created under the Army's "Grow the Force" initiative.

"Fort Riley is already a preeminent power projection platform. First Infantry Division Units, headquartered at Fort Riley, have deployed numerous times in support of the Global War on Terror. The Division and the installation have also played a significant role in developing the Military Transition Teams that are essential to training the Afghan and Iraqi security forces.

"We believe that, consistent with the Army's criteria for selection of Infantry BCT sites, a number of factors favor the selection of Fort Riley for a new IBCT.

"First, the Fort has expansive and high tech, digitized training space, expansive maneuver areas, and the ability to conduct live, virtual, constructive training. These advantages played key roles in the Army's decision to return the 1st Infantry Division (ID) headquarters to Fort Riley. We believe the Fort can extend such benefits to an additional Infantry

Brigade Combat Team.

"Second, as a result of a 2004 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the State Adjutant General and Fort Riley's Commanding General, Fort Riley soldiers can train at the 36,000 acre Smoky Hill Air National Guard Range. The Range provides the opportunity to conduct Joint training on a live, virtual and constructive basis, and include ground forces, rotary wing and Unmanned Aerial Systems assets. In fact, the 4th Brigade, 1st ID conducted such training there in the summer of 2006. The Range is accessible through ground transportation and a Military Operation Area that enables the insertion of troops by air for force on force exercises. The Army would benefit from making such training opportunities available to an additional IBCT.

"Third, Fort Riley and the surrounding communities are prepared to accommodate additional growth. The Fort can add infrastructure within the containment area, as well as the installation as a whole. Further, due to the size, variety and types of training ranges, the Fort has the training capacity to accommodate an additional IBCT.

"State and Local government are already working aggressively to address infrastructure and soldier family support requirements associated with the growth at Fort Riley. They created an Accommodation Task Force, including pertinent State and Local government decisions-makers, to meet the military's needs at Fort Riley and in the surrounding communities. The Task Force continues to be ahead of the curve in meeting and exceeding all requirements for the support of the soldiers at Fort Riley and their families.

"The Delegation is committed to supporting Fort Riley, the 1st ID, and the addition of an Infantry BCT. Together, we affirm our support for the Army's Grow the Force initiatives and urge the selection of Fort Riley as the host for one of the new Infantry Brigade Combat Teams."

The letter was signed by Senators Sam Brownback (R-KS) and Pat Roberts (R-KS), and Representatives Nancy Boyda

(D-KS), Dennis Moore (D-KS), Jerry Moran (R-KS) and Todd Tiahrt (R-KS).

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